



# Memorandum

**TO:** PLANNING COMMISSION

**FROM:** Stephen M. Haase  
Albert Balagso

**SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOODS  
REVITALIZATION PLAN  
STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS  
INITIATIVE UPDATE**

**DATE:** April 30, 2002

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 3  
SNI AREA: University

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Planning staff advises the Planning Commission to recommend that the City Council:  
(1) approve the *University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan, Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Update* as the City/community vision for the future of the University Neighborhoods,  
(2) authorize the Administration to direct the City Departments and Agencies with implementation responsibilities to begin their respective activities, including the general oversight of the implementation of the *Plan* by the Redevelopment Agency, and (3) encourage the University Neighborhoods property owners, residents and community members to dedicate their time, energy and resources to implement the recommendations of the *Plan* and continue their community building activities.

## **BACKGROUND**

The *University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan* was approved by the City Council in October 1998. Since approval of the *Plan*, the University Neighborhoods Coalition (UNC) has created a strong alliance of community organizations and, working closely with the City, has successfully implemented or is in the process of implementing, many of the actions contained within the *Plan*. UNC and the community have now also completed a draft update of the *Revitalization Plan* consistent with Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI).

**University Planning Area.** The approximately 560-acre University Neighborhoods SNI area is bordered by East Santa Clara Street to the north, Coyote Creek to the east, Interstate 280 on the south, and Downtown to the west. The area is comprised of five individual neighborhoods that surround San Jose State University: North Campus, East Campus, South University, Naglee Park and Paseo. The North and East Campus and the South University neighborhoods, adjacent to the University, are primarily comprised of a mix of relatively high-density residential uses: apartments, duplexes, triplexes, and fraternities and sororities as well as single-family homes.

The Paseo Neighborhood, the western portion of the SNI Area, is located within the Downtown Core area. It consists of Paseo Plaza, and the Paseo Villa condominium development, 101 San Fernando Apartments, and the Colonnade, a mixed-use project containing ground floor retail uses and apartment units. Naglee Park, east of 11<sup>th</sup> Street, is a residential neighborhood composed predominately of single-family homes. Both the Naglee Park and the Paseo Neighborhoods were included in the original revitalization plan area as well as the SNI plan area because they are part of this community and have a natural interest in the improvement of the adjacent North, South, and East Campus neighborhoods. In addition, the Naglee Park neighborhood has considerable experience to share, gained from its own successful revitalization efforts.

**Plan Update Process.** The community actively participated in this process by reviewing the existing *Plan*, identifying new and continuing issues in the area, developing new or enhanced action items for the *Plan Update*, identifying redevelopment opportunities in the area, and actively participating in a community workshop and monthly University Neighborhoods Coalition (UNC) meetings. The community workshop was held in June 2001 and all UNC meetings were open to the public.

The UNC is a group of University area residents, property owners, business owners, representatives from various neighborhood associations, including South University Neighborhood, the Horace Mann Neighborhood Association, Campus Community Association, San Jose Downtown Residents Association as well as representatives from San Jose State University, the campus Greek organizations and other interested citizens. The UNC was created and has evolved from the original Advisory Group that led the *Neighborhood Revitalization Plan* process. The UNC acted as the SNI Neighborhood Advisory Committee and from March 2001 through April 2002 devoted an hour, and sometimes more, of their regular monthly meetings to the review and update of their *Neighborhood Revitalization Plan*.

The Update process was also supported by the Council District 3 Office and SNI staff from several City Departments.

## **ANALYSIS**

**Purposes of the Plan Update.** The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative presented an opportunity for the University Neighborhoods to identify additional opportunities and resources that are new or were not foreseen during the *Neighborhood Revitalization Plan* process. *The University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan* was updated to be consistent with the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative by:

- Identifying community needs known, but not included in the original *Plan*.
- Identifying any compelling neighborhood needs that have surfaced since approval of the original *Plan*.
- Searching for and designating potential new development or redevelopment sites.
- Identifying potential funding sources that may differ from or supplement the original *Plan* assumptions.
- Identifying new priorities.

- Reviewing the implications of City and other Agency plans, policies and projects approved or proposed since approval of the original *Neighborhood Revitalization Plan*. Examples include the improvements planned with the City's recently passed library bond measure and the new traffic calming program.

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative *Plan Update* is an update to the original Council approved *University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan*. Together, the *Plan* and the SNI Update outline the vision, goals and objectives of this community and outline the actions that need to occur to achieve their vision.

### **Draft Plan.**

A. The "Top Ten" Priority Actions. The "Top Ten" Priority Actions represent the short list of priority actions that the community selected as having the greatest potential for positive impact. Preliminary priority actions were chosen by community members at a workshop in June 2001 and final priorities were confirmed by the UNC in March 2002. The action items below are ranked in order of importance:

1. Develop a neighborhood park at 6<sup>th</sup> and William Streets.
2. Reconstruct the alleyway between South 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets and East Reed and Margaret Streets.
3. Develop the Coyote Creek Trail.
4. Complete the conversion of South 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Street couplets.
5. Create pedestrian corridors.
6. Establish residential permit parking.
7. Rehabilitate the commercial buildings on the corner of 10<sup>th</sup> and William Streets.
8. Install historic street lighting.
9. Explore the establishment of historic or conservation districts.
10. Establish regular, large-scale community dumpster days.

B. Additional Priorities. In addition to the "Top Ten" priority items above, the University Neighborhoods Coalition identified five additional priorities that they intend to move into their "Top Ten" as original "top Ten" items are completed; several are already nearing completion.

11. Ensure the availability of medical facilities, particularly trauma center services, within the Greater Downtown.
12. Beautify neighborhood gateways.
13. Identify and secure a source of funding to continue the Neighborhood Block Grant Program.
14. Strengthen and improve neighborhood businesses.
15. Re-evaluate the feasibility of converting 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets to two-way traffic between Julian and Interstate 280.

C. Other Action Items. The overall Action Plan includes many additional items for a total of 99 Action Items. The Action Plan Update is organized around the following issue categories

that were established in the *University Neighborhoods Revitalization Plan*. Following are highlights from the overall Action Plan.

1. Neighborhood Security Actions. One of the basic characteristics of a high quality living environment is that people feel safe while in their homes and when carrying out their daily activities. The community identified traffic and pedestrian conditions, crime and gang activity, lighting and alleyways as important security concerns or issues to be addressed in the *Plan Update*.
2. Neighborhood Character and Land Use Actions. An important goal of the *University Plan Update* is to discourage land uses that disrupt the community, and encourage those that enhance the community and contribute to the character of the neighborhoods. Issues relating to street and streetscape maintenance, parking, parks and recreation, and housing are addressed in these actions.
3. Neighborhood Condition and Maintenance Actions. Community members seek to improve the overall appearance and condition of the neighborhood by cleaning up, beautifying, and improving the safety in areas of the neighborhood.
4. Neighborhood Organization Actions. The emphasis of the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative is not only to improve existing neighborhood services but also to support neighborhood associations. This action focuses on strengthening neighborhood organizations such as the UNC and other neighborhoods associations.
5. Neighborhood Services. These actions address the need to enhance neighborhood services within the University Neighborhoods including local businesses and schools as well as preserve the existing medical facilities for the community.

### **Issues of particular note.**

**Zoning Changes:** In the original Council approved *Revitalization Plan* there were several recommendations for Council-initiated rezonings. Selected parcels south of Reed Street, as well as part of the block along 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> between Santa Clara and San Fernando Streets, are again proposed in the *Plan Update* for rezoning from Multiple-Family Residential District (R-M) to R-2 in order to preserve existing single-family and duplex residential uses. In addition, various other parcels were identified for rezoning from commercial to residential districts, where the existing use is residential.

The *Plan Update* also recommends the rezoning of commercial properties from Commercial General (CG) and Commercial Neighborhood (CN) to Commercial Pedestrian (CP) to ensure that neighborhood serving and pedestrian-scale commercial uses are compatible with existing residential uses.

**San Jose Medical Center:** The *Plan Update* identifies the need to maintain the current land use designations for the San Jose Medical Center as a means to ensure the availability of medical facilities, particularly trauma center services within the greater Downtown. The 13<sup>th</sup> Street SNI area also identified the preservation of the San Jose Medical Center as a top priority in their Plan.

***Historic Preservation:*** The University community has identified the area's historic character and the remaining historic and architecturally significant structures as one of the area's biggest assets. The community would like to explore strategies to both protect and enhance the historic character of its neighborhoods. This process would include consideration of historic district or conservation area status where areas qualify for either of these designations. Protection can also be advanced by changes in zoning or General Plan designations.

***Coyote Creek Trail:*** The development of a multi-purpose trail along Coyote Creek is not only a top priority for the University Neighborhood, but is also a top priority for the 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace and Spartan/Keyes SNI areas.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The *Plan* was developed in close coordination with residents and property and business owners of the University Neighborhoods through more than one year of monthly UNC meetings and one community workshop. All property owners, residents, and business owners within the University area were invited to the community workshops through postcard mailers, flyers, and PRNS and PBCE contacts. Community members actively participated in each phase of the planning process.

## **COORDINATION**

The preparation of the *Plan* was coordinated with the District 3 Council Office, the City Manager's Office, and various Departments and Agencies, including the Departments of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement; Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services; Transportation; Public Works; and Police as well as the Redevelopment Agency.

## **CEQA**

An addendum was prepared to the San Jose 2020 General Plan Environmental Impact Report which was previously certified on August 16, 1994 by the City Council (Resolution Number 65459).

ALBERT BALAGSO, ACTING DIRECTOR  
Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services

STEPHEN M. HAASE, DIRECTOR  
Planning, Building and Code Enforcement